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Chairman: Mr. CISSÉ (Senegal)

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AGENDA ITEM 98: INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.55 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 98: INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL (continued) (A/49/89, A/49/139-E/1994/57, A/49/228-S/1994/827, A/49/287-S/1994/894 and Corr.1, A/49/317, A/49/345, A/49/369, A/49/422, A/49/532)

1. Ms. ZHANG Fengkun (China) said that she appreciated the holding of the high-level plenary meeting on drug control during the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, which brought about a strengthening of multilateral cooperation in the fight against drugs. China supported increased coordination and cooperation between UNDCP and the relevant agencies and hoped that international financial and development agencies would devote more resources to the international fight against drugs, especially to assisting the developing countries in promoting alternative development. International cooperation should be guided by the United Nations Charter and principles of international law, including the principle of respecting the sovereignty of countries. It should not be hampered by any artificial obstacles.

2. In the light of the worldwide drug situation, it was necessary to formulate strategies for the international fight against drugs, taking into account the different characteristics of each region. A balanced strategy should be adopted which put equal emphasis on reducing illicit demand for drugs and cracking down on illicit drug production and trafficking. Faithful implementation of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances would be conducive to concerted action and the strengthening of international cooperation. It was therefore imperative to ratify it. In addition, Member States should also implement the Global Programme of Action in accordance with their own domestic situation.

3. With the progressive opening up of China to the outside world, it had experienced the impact in the last few years of the growing problem of drug abuse abroad. Despite repeated crackdowns, drug crimes in China were on the rise, causing serious concern to the Government. In order to protect the physical health of the people and maintain social stability and unity, the Government had intensified its fight against drugs with good results. In 1993 and the first quarter of 1994, many drug-related cases were resolved, tons of heroin, opium and essential chemicals for drug manufacture were confiscated, drug criminals were arrested and drug rehabilitation services were provided. Those actions demonstrated the strong determination of the Chinese Government and people to prosecute drug crimes and to safeguard the national interest and dignity and at the same time contribute to the international anti-drug campaign. Since drug production and consumption abroad had not decreased in recent years, it was difficult to change the situation in the short term. Accordingly, the Chinese Government had decided to step up its border vigilance in order to make it difficult for drugs to enter the country and to increase the capacity of its law enforcement agencies to suppress drug-related crimes. At the same time, China's administrative departments had tightened control over narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and essential chemicals to prevent illicit use. Also, its education department had focused on drug prevention among young people.

4. China had actively supported and participated in the "Golden Triangle" subregional cooperation initiated by UNDCP. During the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, China, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and UNDCP signed a memorandum of understanding on drug control. In July 1994, the five parties held a first meeting in Laos to discuss ways and means to implement the memorandum. That indicated the progress achieved in multilateral subregional cooperation, a strategy initiated and vigorously promoted by UNDCP. China was prepared at all times to cooperate fully with the international community in its drug control activities.

5. Mr. RAICHEV (Bulgaria) said that Bulgaria fully supported the activities of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. His country viewed as positive the deliberations in the coordination segment at the 1994 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council devoted to strengthening the coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system relating to international cooperation in the fight against drugs. Moreover, he commended UNDCP upon its work, in particular its integrated political and multidisciplinary approach in dealing with drug-related issues. Bulgaria agreed that the process of consultation and coordination between UNDCP and its main partners in the United Nations system should be further strengthened and extended to collaboration with other competent intergovernmental organizations, particularly at the regional level.

6. In recent years, there had been a serious deterioration in the situation of drugs and drug abuse in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria. The problem in Bulgaria was aggravated by the geographical situation of the country on the so-called Balkan route from the drug-growing and production areas of the Middle East and Near East to the illegal markets in the West. Despite the fact that new branches of the Balkan route had been created according to available United Nations data, about 70 per cent of the heroin illicit traffic to the target countries, mainly in Western Europe, entered through that route. The war in the former Yugoslavia and the imposed embargo had forced most of the transport vehicles to proceed via the northern border of Bulgaria along the Danube. Contrary to initial expectations of a reduction in illicit drug trafficking as a result of the Security Council sanctions and the strengthening of border control, attempts to transport drugs through the region had continued to increase. According to German statistics, the Bulgarian customs administration ranked first in the amount of heroin seized along the Balkan route.

7. This factor, combined with the changing economic and social conditions, had greatly aggravated the drug problem in Bulgaria. The expansion of the illicit market for psychotropic substances and the spread of heroin and cocaine abuse due to the more active presence of drug-related crime syndicates were particularly alarming. The decentralization and privatization of the pharmaceutical industry and trade had complicated control of psychotropic substances and medicines containing controlled substances. In view of the relatively large number of unemployed specialists and the availability of contemporary technologies, there was a danger of increased illegal production of psychotropic substances.

8. The Bulgarian authorities and public were aware of the negative consequences for the society of a possible worsening of the drug and drug-related problems and therefore were making a special effort to improve national capacity-building in order to cope with them. In 1991 a special branch of the police was created under the Ministry of the Interior to fight organized crime. It had established operative links with INTERPOL and other international agencies. An interministerial committee to coordinate the activities of all State bodies involved in drug prevention and control was also created in 1993. Bulgaria considered that technical assistance, especially for the law enforcement authorities, was of paramount importance for national capacity-building and in particular, for strengthening control at the borders and within the national territory. In that operation, Bulgaria was cooperating actively with bilateral donors as well as with INCB and through UNDCP.

9. Bulgaria was giving special attention to the practical implementation at the national level of the international legal instruments dealing with narcotic drugs. With the help of the Division for Legal Assistance of UNDCP, the Bulgarian authorities had already stated the process of bringing the national legislation into line with the relevant international conventions. It also attached particular importance to cooperation on drug-related issues at the regional and subregional levels. In 1992 Bulgaria acceded to the Council of Europe Convention on the Laundering, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds of Crime. It was also expanding its cooperation with the Group of the Council of Europe for combating drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking, the so-called Pompidou Group, and was participating in various projects under the PHARE programme of the European Union.

10. While reaffirming its political will and commitment to international cooperation in the fight against drug abuse and drug trafficking, Bulgaria was confronted with serious constraints which were limiting its ability to cope effectively with the problem. The heavy foreign debt, restrictive budget policies, the need to cope with the negative side effects of the process of economic restructuring on the overall social situation and the negative impact of the sanctions imposed by the Security Council on the former Yugoslavia were among the factors contributing to the lack of the resources needed to cope with the problems of drugs and drug trafficking which continued to worsen. The shortage of personnel, training and equipment for the law enforcement agencies was also causing major difficulties. Bulgaria considered that the United Nations could be more active in promoting swap "debt for development" deals, including mechanisms for exchanging debt for the fight against illicit trafficking and drug abuse. Meaningful assistance in that regard could be provided through UNDCP.

11. Mr. SEGER (Observer for Switzerland) said there was no single solution to drug abuse problems, and measures aimed at reducing demand should therefore be combined with measures to reduce supply. Switzerland's drug policy, which was governed by the principles established in the international conventions, had four main components: prevention, aimed at avoiding the emergency of new consumers; reduction of the risk of spreading certain diseases and assistance to drug addicts; therapies for drug addicts, which had three aspects - medical, psychological and social - and repression of production, trafficking and

consumption of illegal substances. In view of the constantly increasing marginalization of drug addicts since the late 1980s, a situation aggravated by the appearance of AIDS, the Swiss authorities had decided in 1991 to pay much more attention to the prevention of drug addiction and to the treatment and reintegration of drug addicts through the adoption of a series of measures intended to reduce drug-related problems. Thus, Switzerland, in cooperation with local authorities and non-governmental organizations, had stepped up the implementation of early intervention programmes in schools, rehabilitation institutions and athletic associations and within the framework of the juvenile courts. The main objective of the strategies for assisting drug addicts was to promote their social reintegration and avoid the risk of propagating certain diseases, including AIDS. There were outreach centres where drug addicts received not only injection paraphernalia and condoms, but also basic care and counselling.

12. Within the framework of scientific research on risk reduction, assistance to and treatment of drug addicts, the Government of Switzerland had initiated a three-year programme for the medical prescribing of narcotic drugs - intravenous heroin, morphine and methadone as well as oral methadone - which had initially involved 700 people. On 3 October 1994 the Government had decided to increase that figure to a total of 1,000 drug addicts.

13. Those experiments, which constituted one step towards conquering addiction, were aimed at stabilizing or improving the physical and psychological health of the patients; helping them to rejoin society by developing their capacity to work, removing them from a drug-taking environment and assisting them to resume their occupations; reducing delinquency linked to drug procurement and raising awareness of the risk of HIV infection. Although the programme had been operational for only a few months, those in charge had already drawn preliminary conclusions and had observed that the physical and mental health of some patients had stabilized.

14. The programme for the medical prescribing of narcotic drugs had given rise to some questions and even criticism, but many European countries had expressed the desire to be informed about the scientific evaluations under way. Furthermore, although Switzerland understood the concerns expressed, there should be no doubt about the scientific character of the experiments, which in no way constituted a covert form of legalizing narcotic drug consumption. It should be noted that Switzerland could not act without the consent of the International Narcotics Control Board of the United Nations. It should also be remembered that the experiments in no way precluded traditional therapeutic measures. That was demonstrated by the fact that on 3 October 1994 Switzerland had decided to offer drug addicts more opportunities to enter specialized centres with a view to overcoming their addictions.

15. In addition to implementing measures aimed at helping drug addicts, it was essential to respect the basic tenets of the rule of law by applying forceful repressive measures. To that end, the personnel of the Central Office for the Repression of Drug Trafficking had been substantially increased and a computerized data system named "DOSIS" had been set up to facilitate the exchange of information among police departments at both the inter-cantonal and

international levels. Furthermore, liaison agents were being employed within the framework of international collaboration against drug trafficking. By 1996, 10 such agents would be posted in various places, the first destinations being Lyons and Washington.

16. The measures he had just mentioned formed part of a comprehensive drug control strategy. Thus, on 22 June 1994, the Government of Switzerland had approved the message of Parliament on Switzerland's accession to the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1972 Protocol amending the 1961 Convention. Given the way its political system functioned, Switzerland had not been able to take a definitive decision on the ratification of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, but the measures he had mentioned certainly provided convincing proof of Switzerland's will to step up its participation in the international community's fight against drugs.

17. Mr. RODRIGUES (Portugal) congratulated the General Assembly on the initiatives taken in the sphere of international drug control and urged that the work should be continued with renewed vigour. Despite the enormous efforts made by Governments and non-governmental organizations, drug consumption and trafficking had continued to increase, to the point where more and more sectors of the international community were expressing concern about the efficiency of the international monitoring and control system. There was therefore an urgent need to enhance its effectiveness, so as to prevent a constant deterioration of the situation which would have serious consequences for both individuals and society.

18. Portugal had incorporated in its national legislation the measures recommended in the 1961, 1971 and 1988 Conventions, particularly those relating to money-laundering and precursor control. In 1987, in accordance with the recommendations of the Multidisciplinary Outline, a national drug control programme had been adopted, encompassing demand, supply, the treatment of drug addiction and a study of the scope and characteristics of the drug phenomenon as a whole.

19. In the light of the World Plan of Action and the analysis of the practical results obtained, the methods used to implement the measures embodied in the national programme and the efforts made to attain its objectives had been significantly improved, with encouraging results. First, it was the consensus among the public that prevention was essential and fundamental; second, since drug consumption was always linked to high rates of consumption of tobacco, alcohol and certain medications, on the one hand, and to social and psychological maladjustment on the other, prevention should cover all harmful substances, form part of the general education process and include measures aimed at reducing the factors causing social and psychological maladjustment in people at risk. As a result of that collective learning process, the prevention of drug consumption was no longer regarded as the sole responsibility of the State or of specialists, but as a task incumbent on all those involved in the education and health systems. At the same time, the evolution of all aspects of the drug phenomenon was being kept under constant review, as were the efforts to combat trafficking and the reactions of drug addicts, particularly those who

were HIV positive, to treatment. The aim was to emphasize prevention, which might not be considered a priority investment since it produced long-term results.

20. At the regional level, Portugal participated in the work of the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe on epidemiology, prevention of consumption, treatment of drug addicts and preparation of normative instruments for the entire continent. Within the European Union, Portugal had supported the adoption of the European Plan of World Action to Combat Drugs in 1995-1999 and the establishment of the European Observatory for Drugs and Drug Addition. The Observatory, situated in Lisbon, collected, processed and disseminated information on the evolution and characteristics of the drug phenomenon in general and drug abuse in particular, and could play an important role in enhancing the effectiveness of the measures and activities of the European Union and its member States. He urged the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to follow the example of the WHO and the Pompidou Group and establish machinery for cooperation with the International Drug Abuse Assessment System.

21. Pending receipt of the conclusions of the intergovernmental group of experts established by the General Assembly, and with a view to the evaluation of the efforts made at the world-wide level and the contribution of the International Narcotics Control Board to the 1995 report on the implementation of the international treaties, Portugal urged that during the remainder of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse the General Assembly should continue monitoring the situation, i.e., evaluating the effectiveness of the control system; continue promoting the implementation of the World Programme of Action as the guiding instrument for activity at the world-wide, regional and national levels; and call for increasing participation and closer cooperation by all the United Nations bodies and specialized agencies most directly concerned with prevention. Portugal stood ready to do all it could to help ensure that by the end of the century it could be said that the drug problem was under control.

22. Mr. COLOMA (Chile) said that Chile's recent approval of Act 18.403 penalizing the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances was a milestone in its efforts to combat that scourge. The law designated money-laundering as a crime and provided for a pretrial investigation phase under which access could be obtained to information protected by banking secrecy, funds could be frozen and suspects were prohibited from leaving the country. In addition, there was provision for strict controls on the import and export of chemical precursors, and for severe penalties for diversion of such substances. The Act was in conformity with the provisions of the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

23. With reference to the Secretary-General's report on the System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control (A/49/139-E/1994/57), he indicated his delegation's support for attaching primary importance to national plans. In its view, the first prerequisite for tackling the drug problem adequately was the expression of the political will of States through multidisciplinary plans and programmes and the establishment of central coordination and management bodies. Chile had made progress in the activity of all the bodies dealing with the problem since

the approval in 1992 of the national drug prevention and control programme, which served as a guide for non-governmental organizations.

24. In Chile's view, the support of international bodies dealing with the issue, such as UNDCP, was needed, but it was important for the other agencies of the United Nations system to join in those efforts. Chile had benefited from the assistance of WHO, especially in relation to the establishment of epidemiological monitoring. ILO had supported the work of preventing consumption in the working environment. Chile would welcome greater participation of UNESCO and UNICEF in those activities, since the drug problem was related to education and culture and seriously affected children. Likewise, FAO should make its presence felt in producing countries.

25. Chile believed that international cooperation was essential in tackling the drug problem. To the international agreements already signed by Chile was added the preparation of a cooperation agreement between Argentina, Bolivia, Peru, Chile and UNDCF for the conduct of joint projects with the support of UNDCF in relation to prevention and treatment, training, cooperation in relation to the illicit traffic, trade in precursors and money-laundering, as well as issues related to alternative development. Regional agreements were a way of adding the support of other agencies of the United Nations system.

26. In conclusion, he indicated that the sixteenth regular session of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), at which the countries members of the Organization of American States (OAS) had reaffirmed their commitment to adopt all necessary measures to tackle the problem in the region and their determination to expand and strengthen mechanisms for cooperation with UNDCP and other international agencies at the intergovernmental level, had taken place in Chile from 18 to 21 October 1994.

27. Mrs. ENGELBRECHT (South Africa) said that her delegation supported the aims and objectives of the United Nations and other international organizations in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action in international drug control. South Africa was a party to all multilateral treaties dealing with narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances except the 1998 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. To that end, a Drug Advisory Board had been established and the internal legislation had been put in place. All that remained was to establish a mechanism which would be responsible for monitoring the movement of precursors as provided for in article 12 of that Convention. The police would be the main authority in monitoring precursors and would report to the International Narcotics Control Board. As soon as the Government approved the mechanism and it became operational, South Africa would accede to the 1988 Convention.

28. South Africa's geographical position in the African continent and the recent opening of its borders, among other factors, made it an ideal transit country and a possible market for drugs. To combat the smuggling and dissemination of narcotic drugs, South Africa cooperated with law enforcement agencies of other countries, particularly the United States. The South African Narcotics Bureau (SANAB) frequently participated in operations within and outside the southern African region. South Africa's readmission to the

International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) had facilitated its efforts to combat traffic in narcotics. SANAB had trained various groups of officials from other African countries, and the possibility of establishing a regional training centre was being studied. In addition, with the joint involvement of INTERPOL, SANAB had recently organized the Second Interregional Meeting on the Illicit Traffic in Methaqualone (mandrax). The resolutions adopted at that meeting inter alia recognized the need for cooperation and exchange of information and provided for the establishment of a regional database, to be operated by SANAB at Pretoria. Toll-free telephone and fax facilities would be financed by the South African police.

29. From 14 to 18 November 1994, a Southern Africa Legal Workshop on Subregional Cooperation Against Drug Trafficking organized by the South African Department of Justice would be held at Pretoria, under the auspices of UNDP. In 1995, South Africa would organize a further regional narcotics conference, in line with a proposal made by its Minister for Foreign Affairs at the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Southern African Development Community and the European Union held at Berlin in September 1994. In addition, the possibility of concluding a regional memorandum of understanding which would formalize and improve regional cooperation was being examined, in line with a suggestion made by UNDP in its report on the visit of its representatives to South Africa.

30. Mr. THOMPSON (Jamaica) speaking on behalf of the countries members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the CARICOM States were of the view that the effectiveness of the abuse control system depended on the political will and commitment of States to take decisive action to make it work. In that regard, ratification of the international treaties and strict compliance with their objectives and principles were essential. The CARICOM States welcomed the assistance UNDCP would be providing to Governments in the establishment and strengthening of drug detection laboratories, as well as for its advice on developing national laboratories and training scientific staff.

31. A good example of the effectiveness of system-wide coordination activities was the convening of regional seminars to ensure that national drug administrations were familiar with the provisions of international treaties and with the international control system. The Expert Forum on Demand Reduction in the Caribbean, held at Nassau, Bahamas, from 4 to 7 October, which had been attended by a large number of representatives of governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, had analysed, inter alia, methodology for data collection, multisector coordination, treatment, education and social integration. CARICOM would continue to support such multilateral cooperation activities. It was encouraging that the first session of the Working Group on maritime cooperation had been held at Vienna from 19 to 23 September. It was, however, unfortunate that consensus had not been reached on the report, and it was to be hoped that at the next session, to be held from 20 to 24 February 1995, it would be possible to reach agreement on all outstanding issues.

32. The CARICOM States were directly on the maritime routes from South America to North America and Europe. That geographical location made them susceptible

to use as transshipment points by drug cartels. Virtually all smuggling methods used in the subregion, including the frequently used air-drop method, involved some activity by sea, and that was of great concern to the countries affected in varying degrees by the illicit transit traffic by sea, in that it exposed the population to the scourge of drug abuse.

33. CARICOM hoped that the report of the Working Group on maritime cooperation would produce concrete proposals for the promotion of such cooperation while bearing in mind respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. The cornerstone of bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the fight against the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances was strict compliance with the established principles of international relations and international law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

34. The CARICOM States drew attention to the fact that disregard of article 10 of the 1988 Convention, dealing with international cooperation and assistance to transit States, would impede international efforts to combat drug abuse and would serve to exacerbate the problem. Given that international drug cartels used transit States in their chain of criminal activities, CARICOM urged major donors, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, UNDCP and other concerned United Nations bodies to give special attention to article 10 in instituting their cooperation, which was essential to the implementation of the 1988 Convention.

35. The CARICOM States would appreciate receiving information from UNDCP on the steps that were being taken or had been taken for the implementation of resolution 1 (XXXVII) of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and were confident that UNDCP, in establishing the three-year action plan and model money-laundering legislation, had cooperated with the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, as those areas necessitated the expertise of the Branch. Since model money-laundering legislation had been developed for States with civil law systems, they urged the relevant divisions of the Secretariat to collaborate, as a matter of priority, in drafting model money-laundering legislation for common-law States, such as those of the Caribbean Community. In that respect, assistance in the area of law enforcement was essential.

36. Mutual legal assistance was one of the specific areas for joint initiatives by UNDCP and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch. Legal training workshops had been held in some CARICOM States, and a few of those States would appreciate the Secretariat's assistance in their preparations for adherence to the various anti-narcotics conventions. The CARICOM States were convinced that the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch could make a valuable contribution to future workshops.

37. With regard to the question of demand and consumption, the CARICOM States supported balanced drug control strategies that gave appropriate priority both to primary prevention and treatment and to rehabilitation, for example, the development of systems to monitor the nature, extent and patterns of drug abuse, the intensification of educational and public information programmes and the establishment of partnerships with non-governmental organizations. There was an urgent need to support strategies that stimulated socio-economic growth and

reinforced alternative rural development in developing countries where narcotic drugs were produced, and to study the clear relationship between poverty and deprivation and illicit drug production and trafficking in those countries.

38. With regard to the restructuring of international economic relations, the CARICOM States were pleased that, in 1991, UNDCP had developed the concept of a "debt-for-drugs" swap, aimed at converting the official bilateral debt of heavily indebted producer countries into local currency debt. The servicing of that debt, which would be set aside in a national fund for alternative development, was to be used for drug control. Thus, Governments would be enabled to tackle national issues of economic development, such as income generation, rural infrastructure and agricultural development. In addition, that initiative might be expanded to transit countries, under the proposals of the Executive Director of UNDCP, for the establishment of a programme of debt relief for transit countries, in accordance with the objective of article 10 of the 1988 Convention. All the measures adopted in the proposals submitted by UNDCP for debt conversion and development of further links with the international financial institutions and regional development banks were encouraging to the CARICOM States, since the servicing of the external debt burden drastically reduced the resources available for effective drug control projects, as well as for economic and social development.

39. The CARICOM States wanted UNDCP to carry out its activities as efficiently and effectively as possible, and to that end Governments must give the Programme succinct directives. Diverse, equitable participation in the work of UNDCP would provide the necessary know-how for formulating viable drug control strategies and policies to meet objectives in all regions of the world.

40. Mr. TIN (Myanmar) drew attention to the need to embark on national anti-drug campaigns and to cooperate fully with the international community in attaining a balanced method of resolving the question of demand, supply and illegal trafficking. In the past, Myanmar's strategy had been focused on the destruction of poppy fields. However, in 1988, a new method of drug control had been established in the context of the Master Plan for the economic development and well-being of the national races who inhabited the remote border areas where the poppy was cultivated. In 1992, the Government of the Union of Myanmar had established the Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs, with the aim of upgrading the infrastructure and economic system of those areas, which had once been dominated by the Burma Communist Party insurgents, by introducing alternative cash crops, livestock breeding and mineral exploration in all to wean the population away from poppy cultivation. The national races of the border areas had accepted the Government's measures and have participated in the building of the necessary infrastructure in their regions. In the same spirit, a total of 13 armed groups had returned to the legal fold to participate in economic and social development in their regions, which augured well for peace and solidarity and for the eradication of the poppy throughout the country.

41. With regard to cooperation measures at the regional and subregional levels, and in keeping with the global programme of action, the Government of Myanmar had cooperated with neighbouring countries to harmonize its activities. It had

signed agreements with the People's Republic of China and UNDCP, as well as with Thailand and UNDCP for the purpose of coordinating measures to control drug abuse, production and illicit trafficking. It had also signed agreements with India and the Lao People's Democratic Republic and would soon sign an agreement with Bangladesh with a view to establishing machinery for combating drug trafficking in cooperation with the five neighbouring countries. It had also signed a memorandum of understanding in October 1993 with the People's Republic of China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and UNDCP.

42. Mr. FLORENCIO (Brazil) said that the question of drug control should be viewed from three different angles. First, from the perspective of demand pressures originating in countries with high consumption of drugs. The means of reducing demand should be based not only on punishment but also on preventive education, media campaigns and community programmes. Such an integrated method had been examined at the Latin American Subregional Expert Forum on Demand Reduction, recently held in Brazil. At the operational levels, it was essential to assure effective implementation of the control mechanisms defined in article 12 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. The second perspective was focused on economic and social backwardness leading to drug production and trafficking in many countries. In the transit countries, as in the case of Brazil, measures to combat drug abuse had to be associated with those relating to poverty eradication and other social development measures. Similarly, in drug producing countries, drug control measures had to respect human rights and cultural traditions, as well as the environment. The third consideration related to financial regulations and poor monitoring, which stimulated international trafficking and the financing of criminal activities that took advantage of the existence of numerous safe haven for money laundering. It was essential to complement measures against drug abuse with rigorous surveillance of international banking and financial activities.

43. He commended the progress made at the international level as described in the report of the Secretary-General on the matter (A/49/345) and the excellent work done by UNDCP in the form of assistance to more than 100 countries. In that regard, the cooperation between Brazil and UNDCP was focused on specific punitive projects, in coordination with the federal police and the prevention of drug abuse. In the national context of the strengthening of the internal mechanisms coordinated by the Federal Narcotics Board, the Government had created a National Secretariat to coordinate the various drug control agencies, which had made it possible to enhance the existing mechanisms for cooperation between governmental and non-governmental organizations, particularly with regard to the prevention of drug trafficking, and a close relationship had been established between the central Government and the 26 state councils in charge of drug issues. The National Secretariat was also responsible for the management of the financial resources provided by the Fund for Prevention, Recovery and Combating of Drugs, Derived from Auctions of Goods Confiscated as a Result of Operations against Illicit Drug Trafficking.

44. The Government of Brazil considers it essential to ensure the effective participation of society in drug control. Among the measures recently adopted by the non-governmental sector were the construction of a series of centres and

associations devoted to the prevention of drug abuse and the rehabilitation of drug users, especially in large cities. The integrated measures adopted by the Government and society on issues such as hunger and poverty might serve as a reference and inspiration for joint initiatives against drug trafficking.

45. Brazil believed that the implementation of international drug control provisions was essential, and it had therefore taken all necessary steps for the implementation of the United Nations Convention of 1988. It had also signed agreements of drug control with all Latin American countries, as well as with several other countries of the American continent and Europe. Brazil was willing to increase cooperation with third countries in that domain, through bilateral or multilateral instruments, provided that the international principles of neutrality and voluntary nature were observed and the developing countries benefited therefrom, in accordance with their own policies and priorities.

46. Ms. WHITE (Canada) said that, at the national level, continuing efforts were being made to reduce the demand for and the supply of drugs, with the collaboration of police agencies, the customs authorities, the coast guard and national defence, so as to respond to the efforts of organized traffickers in Canada. At the same time, the issues of demand reduction through education, prevention and treatment initiatives were being pursued by Health Canada and other provincial, territorial and municipal departments, as well as by the voluntary sector.

47. With regard to international cooperation, she said that the meeting of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission of the Organization of American States had endorsed efforts to increase cooperation between the Commission and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. Similarly, the Programme and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch were coordinating activities and expertise in areas affecting them both, such as money laundering and organized transnational crime. As to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/12, an expert group on maritime cooperation, in which Canada was participating, was working to issue concrete recommendations on improving the implementation of article 17 of the 1988 Convention.

48. Of concern to all was the increase in production and trafficking of narcotic drugs, especially in view of the significant financial resources available to drug trafficking organizations and the inadequate capacity of Governments to respond rapidly to evolving circumstances. Increased national and international cooperation was essential, in the light of the new problems and trends. National programmes to reduce the demand for drugs were more effective in the long term. It was necessary, however, to strive for an appropriate legal environment and for a political will to combat drug trafficking and corruption. It was also important to develop programmes of rehabilitation, education, prevention and treatment at the national level. Information exchanges on the successes and failures of such programmes could benefit all countries.

49. Canada remained firmly committed to its balanced approach, namely law enforcement and interdiction of drugs, combined with a reduction of demand for

drugs and cooperation with the Drug Control Programme, with other agencies of the United Nations and the Organization of American States, and with States Members of the United Nations.

50. Mr. WISSA (Egypt) said that a global policy must be adopted to combat the drug problem so that the United Nations and the international community might fulfil their crucial role in protecting mankind from that scourge. It was necessary to ensure full implementation of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, particularly resolution 48/112, by the Economic and Social Council and by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, if a genuine solution was to be found to that problem. In that connection, he drew attention to the work of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, which was coordinating all activities within the United Nations system aimed at combating drug use and illicit trafficking.

51. The Drug Control Programme had to enjoy the support of all States if it was to attain its objectives. The question of international drug control was closely linked to the programme of work for the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development, for it had political, social and economic implications for society. He drew attention to the importance of the document to be submitted by the Drug Control Programme to the Summit regarding the social and economic consequences of drug abuse, and the importance of the measures proposed to address that problem.

52. His Government shared the concerns expressed in the Third Committee by representatives and by the Executive Director of the Programme regarding the scarcity of resources. Despite its economic constraints, Egypt had always cooperated with the United Nations in that sphere. It reiterated the appeal to the donor countries to increase their contributions, and to the international financial institutions to participate in funding the Drug Control Programme, without having to reduce financial resources for development and without violating the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

53. In conclusion, Egypt commended the work performed by the United Nations system, particularly the support provided by WHO and ILO for programmes carried out in Egypt, especially the technical assistance for drug treatment research laboratories and the training programmes in the drafting of specific legislation in that area. Likewise, it praised the WHO effort to prepare programmes in Arabic for the training of staff responsible for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts. For the benefit of the Arabic-speaking countries, the Department of Public Information should translate into Arabic the information bulletins prepared in English, French and Spanish.

54. Mr. GUILLÉN SALAS (Peru) said that with the adoption of the Convention in 1988 and the Programme of Action in 1990, and with the establishment of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme in 1991, the international community should join forces during the United Nations Decade Against Drug Abuse and promote implementation of the Global Programme of Action, which was a key tool in strengthening and coordinating the activities of the United Nations system. It was necessary, however, to evaluate the components of the Programme of Action, which must take into account all manifestations of the phenomenon.

It was essential to foster firm and concrete commitments among the consumer countries, and to promote the programmes being developed in the producer countries to attack the economic and social roots of the problem, for there were complex economic and social factors contributing to the gravity of the situation.

55. The coca leaf, which was not in itself a drug, was cultivated - as an alternative means of survival - by rural groups that were excluded from the structured economy and from access to wealth. Those groups were supported by traffickers who encouraged demand and consumption in the developed societies. Peru, the world's largest producer of coca leaves, considered that the programmes of alternative development referred to in General Assembly resolution 48/12 took into account the social and economic dimension of the scourge. Through that strategy, efforts were being made to integrate fully into the legitimate economy the social groups involved in those activities, by implementing plans and programmes to launch an integrated socio-economic development system within an ecologically sustainable framework and with the necessary support of certain less restrictive world markets.

56. International coordination and cooperation against drug trafficking were essential. The recent summit meeting of Presidents of States members of the Rio Group had supported the proposal by the President of Peru aimed at harmonizing legislation to punish money laundering, permitting the confiscation of property connected with drug trafficking, establishing speedy extradition procedures, promoting judicial and police cooperation in that area, and fostering cooperation in alternative development. At the regional level, he drew attention to the work of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, which also understood the need for an integrated approach to the drug problem.

57. The fight against illicit drug trafficking required a stronger political commitment on the part of the international community. His Government's close cooperation with the Organization, through the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), had helped to enhance the effectiveness of cooperation programmes in the various national priority areas. A national plan for drug prevention and control had been adopted. That plan established a national drug control system responsible for directing overall strategy; the cornerstones of which were alternative development and the punishment of drug traffickers. In addition to introducing advanced legislation for the control and punishment of crimes related to drug trafficking, such as the diversion of precursors and essential chemicals, traffic in arms and explosives and money-laundering, Peru had been successful in dismantling and eradicating the links between terrorist organizations and drug trafficking, in controlling airports and in intercepting aircraft engaged in illicit activities. In 1993, there had been a 16 per cent reduction in coca growing for illicit purposes.

58. Mr. Wonil CHO (Republic of Korea) said that, despite the efforts of the international community and UNDCP, the international drug situation continued to deteriorate. The problem must be addressed in a more comprehensive and coordinated manner, based on the principle of genuine cooperation. The Global Programme of Action must be implemented fully with the active participation of Member States, since it served not only as a framework for individual

Governments to tackle the problem, but also as a solid foundation for furthering international cooperation. He emphasized the importance of stronger coordination among United Nations agencies and, in that connection, welcomed the recently updated System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control, which provided a realistic framework for improving cooperation and coordination throughout the United Nations system. His delegation hoped that all United Nations agencies would submit their specific implementation plans as soon as possible. Much remained to be done to promote the participation of the international financial institutions, which was essential for combating money-laundering and for formulating alternative development schemes. Given the need to strengthen cooperation between UNDCP and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch, his delegation looked forward to the World Ministerial Conference on Organized Transnational Crime, to be held in Naples in November.

59. Regarding the implementation of the System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control, his country welcomed the UNDCP initiative to adopt a bottom-up approach to the drug problem. Such an approach would contribute to a better understanding of the drug-related problems of individual countries and would generate appropriate strategies and essential information at that level. Given the need to enhance subregional, regional and international cooperation, his delegation welcomed the recent initiatives by UNDCP to address the problem at the subregional level, particularly through the development and reinforcement of inter-country arrangements, and its collaboration with regional organizations and other relevant intergovernmental agencies.

60. His Government was fully committed to promoting regional cooperation, as demonstrated by its hosting of the Eighteenth Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Asia and the Pacific in September 1993. While recognizing that a balanced approach to drug supply and demand was essential, his delegation was convinced of the importance of a strategy for reducing demand. Demand reduction could be achieved through prevention campaigns that combined the use of education and the mass media with the active involvement of non-government organizations. Treatment and rehabilitation were also measures that must be taken to reduce demand.

61. Resource availability was essential to the fight against drugs. The international community must provide much needed resources so that UNDCP could carry out its responsibilities, and Governments must allocate adequate resources at the national level. There must be an increase in voluntary contributions by Member States, assistance from international financial organizations and allocations under the United Nations regular budget. To enhance States' capacities, the concept of a "debt-for-drugs" swap should be studied further and the participation of the international financing organizations should be promoted. Lastly, as the experience of the first anti-drug ambassadors had proved, a goodwill ambassador could play a significant role in that regard, not only by raising funds for UNDCP, but also by disseminating information on the harmful effects of drug abuse.

62. Mr. LEPESHKO (Belarus) said that since the late 1960s, there had been an unprecedented increase in the sale, consumption and trafficking of drugs, a situation that had also affected his country. There were signs that in the

coming years, drug traffickers would become interested in the region of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, where they believed it would be easier for them to traffic because of the lack of border controls. Because his country's borders with the new States created in the territory of the former Soviet Union were less tightly controlled than those of Western Europe, the international drug mafia hoped to be able to use the territory of Belarus for drug trafficking. That such a notion was more than mere conjecture was demonstrated by the route followed by drug trafficking, which started in the countries of the Golden Crescent (Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan) and ran through the Central Asian countries, the Russian Federation, Belarus, Poland and Germany. In 1993 alone, some 40 cases of drug smuggling had been reported on the western border of Belarus. Until recently, drug abuse and the illicit manufacture and sale of narcotic drugs had not presented serious problems in Belarus. Since it had become a transit country, however, the situation had changed radically. Drug trafficking through his country had caused increasing numbers of the population to become involved in that activity, resulting in physical and psychological damage.

63. Belarus was taking decisive action to step up the fight against illicit trafficking and sale of drugs at the national, regional and international levels. A draft of a new criminal code had been approved containing a section, based on the international legal documents related to the fight against drugs, that imposed criminal liability for drug-related crimes. The new laws paid special attention to the problem of prevention. The national crime control programme being prepared by Belarus included a series of proposals for intensifying efforts to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking. Deliberations were also nearing completion on the creation of an interdepartmental drug control committee, which would be responsible for coordinating the work of the competent departments and ministries with that of the International Narcotics Control Board.

64. Believing that concerted action was needed to tackle the drug problem, his Government had signed the multilateral agreement on cooperation in combating illicit traffic in drugs and psychotropic substances in the countries of the former Soviet Union, which among other things, envisaged the possibility of creating a common information system. In 1993, the Governments of Belarus and Italy had signed agreements on the computerized exchange of information on the illicit transport of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances along the Balkan route, and on cooperation in combating illicit narcotic drug distribution and organized crime. Similar agreements were being drafted with other States. With regard to international cooperation, Belarus had joined the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) in 1993.

65. His country respected all the legislative measures adopted by the United Nations to combat drug addiction and was a party to all the relevant international conventions. It had confidence in the work of the United Nations as focal point for international activities to combat drug addiction and welcomed the rationalization of its working methods. It also commended UNDCP efforts in connection with the Global Programme of Action. Belarus supported the idea of drafting a new, unified convention for the control of narcotic drugs

and psychotropic substances that would bring together the various multilateral conventions currently existing in that sphere.

66. Mrs. ABDEL GALIL (Sudan) said that, having read the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 48/112 (A/49/369), her delegation endorsed the recommendations of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs with respect to the enhancement of international cooperation in cross-border investigations and drug control, training to combat money-laundering and regional cooperation to deal with drug cartels.

67. The Sudan supported the initiative of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) on swapping debt for alternative development in the area of international drug abuse control, since it could contribute to the suppression of drug trafficking in future. Her country was very concerned about combating drugs and illicit drug trafficking, and that was why it had acceded to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, as well as the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. The Sudan was also party to all the regional and subregional conventions on the subject. At the national level, the Sudan had promulgated a law on controlled substances - the first with provisions for drug addiction - and others relating to opium, hashish and psychotropic substances. It had also instituted the death penalty for illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and strengthened penalties for related offences. Her country was satisfied with the approach now followed by the International Court of Justice, which henceforth would consider drug-related offences.

68. The Sudan did not have the drug problems encountered by other countries, thanks to its religious and social customs and values, which offered meaningful protection against drug addiction especially among youth. Nevertheless, the country's geographical location made it a place of transit. Natural and manufactured drugs from West and Central Africa entered the country through its western and southern borders respectively and were then transported via tortuous routes to the Red Sea and onward to the Arab world and Europe. That was why her country was requesting assistance in order to strengthen drug-control mechanisms and train drug-control specialists.

69. In view of her country's concern about the problem of narcotic drugs, both the legislative and executive branches of government had taken on the issue. The provisional national assembly had established a working group to consider the problems relating to narcotic drugs and ways and means of resolving them. The Sudan's strategy involved, on the one hand, an awareness-raising campaign, including two information seminars on the misuse of precursors, pamphlets and films on the dangers of narcotic drugs and, on the other, the fight against drug cartels and drug traffickers, the treatment of drug addicts and the establishment of mechanisms to prevent the cultivation of opiates. In 1992, more than 200 tons of cannabis had been impounded.

70. The Government's efforts were supplemented by the people's efforts directed by the National Committee on Drug Control established in 1960. The Committee was composed of representatives of the regions involved in the fight against

drugs, the police, the judicial bodies, the ministries of health, education, social welfare, culture and the mass media, as well as the University of Khartoum. The Committee conducted campaigns aimed at alerting the public to the harmful effects of drugs and proposed amendments to drug-control legislation. It coordinated its activities with those of the Committee on Pharmaceutical Policies, identified dangerous drugs and ensured their rational use for medical purposes only.

71. The Ministry for Drug Control, established pursuant to the recommendations of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs and to the decisions of the Conference of Presidents of countries involved in the war against drugs held in Cairo in June 1990, was responsible for coordinating the activities of the various bodies. As far as rehabilitation was concerned, instead of incarcerating drug addicts, they were turned over to specialists for treatment.

72. The Sudan needed long term help in its drug control efforts. The United Nations had begun to provide assistance in 1987 and continued to do so, but much still remained to be done. As part of the war on drugs, measures had been taken in concert with the Sudanese customs authorities to facilitate information exchange and coordination at the highest level, and to standardize police procedures. Steps had been taken to prevent the banking system from being used to launder money. The drug cartels could not attain their objective by force, since arms trafficking had been banned in the Sudan and tight controls had been placed on public and private pharmacies to prevent the illicit sale of psychotropic substances. Coordination had also been established with neighbouring African countries and with the Arab countries. The Sudan had organized a United Nations-sponsored conference on drug control for Arab countries. It also sent its representatives to the United Nations in order to exchange information on activities in that area.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.